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The **VALIANTS of VIRGI** FIALLIE CRMINIE RIVES POST WHEELER) there came to her ear a mellow sound. It was the bell of the courthouse in

ILLUSTRATED BY LAUREN STOUT

CHAPTER I—John Valiant, a rich so-clety favorite, suddenly discovers that the Valiant corporation, which his father founded and which was the principal source of his wealth, has failed.

CHAPTER II—He voluntarily turns over his private fortune to the receiver for the corporation.

CHAPTER III—His entire remaining possessions consist of an old motor car, a white bull dog and Damory court, a neglected estate in Virginia.

CHAPTER IV—He learns that this estate came into the family by royal grant and has been in the possession of the Valiants ever since.

CHAPTER V-On the way to Damory court he meets Shirley Dandridge, an auburn-haired beauty, and decides that he is going to like Virginia immensely. CHAPTER VI—An old negro tells Shir-ley's fortune and predicts great trouble for her on account of a man.

CHAPTER VII—Uncle Jefferson, an old negro, takes Valiant to Damory court.

CHAPTER VIII—Shirley's mother, Mrs. Dandridge, and Major Bristow exchange reminiscences during which it is revealed that the major, Valiant's father, and a man named Sassoon, were rivals for the hand of Mrs. Dandridge in her youth. Sassoon and Valiant fought a duel on her account in which the former was killed.

CHAPTER IX-Vallant finds Damory court overgrown with weeds and creep-ers and the buildings in a very much neglected condition. Uncle Jefferson and his wife, Aunt Daphne, are engaged as

CHAPTER X-Valiant explores his an-cestral home. He is surprised by a fox nunting party which invades his estate. He recognizes Shirley at the head of the

CHAPTER XI-He gives sanctuary to the cornered fex. Gosslps discuss the ad-vent of the new owner and recall the tragedy in which the elder Vallant took

CHAPTER XII-Valiant decides to re-habilitate Damory court and make the land produce a living for him.

CHAPTER XIII—He meets Shirley, who has been gathering flowers on the Valiani estate, and reveals his identity to her. CHAPTER XIV-Vallant saves Shirley

from the bite of a snake, which bites him. Knowing the deadliness of the bite, Shir-ley sucks the poison from the wound and saves his life. CHAPTER XV-Shirley tells her mother of the incident and the latter is strangely moved at hearing that a Vallant is again living at Damory court.

CHAPTER XVI-Vallant learns some of the history of his family from Doctor Southall and Major Bristow.

CHAPTER XVII—He learns for the first time that his father left Virginia on account of a duel in which Doctor South-all and Major Bristow acted as his fath-er's seconds.

CHAPTER XVIII-Valiant and Shirley become good friends. Mrs. Dandridge faints when she first meets Valiant.

sheer edge of the turf. She swayed nearness of her body. It ridged all his from a white chintz-covered chair, her skin with a creeping delight. She re- anxiety only partially allayed by reascovered her footing with an exclamation, and turned back somewhat ab- her young cheek against the delicate ruptly to the porch where she seated arm in its lacy sleeve or to pass her herself on the step, drawing her filmy skirt aside to make a place for him. There was a moment of silence which he broke.

"That exquisite serenade you were playing! You know the words, of "They are more lovely, if possible,

than the score. Do you care for poetry? "Ive always loved it." he said. "I've been reading some lately-a little oldfashioned book I found at Damory

Court It's 'Lucile.' Do you know it?" "Yes. It's my mother's favorite." He drew it from his pocket. "See, I've got it here. It's marked, too." He opened it, to close it instantly-

not, however, before she had put out her hand and laid it, palm down, on the page. "That rose! Oh, let me have it!"

"Never!" he protested. "Look here When I put it between the leaves, I did so at random. I didn't see till now that I had opened it at a marked passage."

"Let us read it," she said. He leaned and held the leaf to the light from the doorway and the two heads bent together over the text. A sound fell behind them and both turned A slight figure, in a soft gray gown with old lace at the throat, stood in the doorway behind them. John Valiant sprang to his feet.

"Ah, Shirley, I thought I heard voices. Is that you, Chilly?" "It's not Mr. Lusk, mother," said

Shirley. "It's our new neighbor, Mr. Valiant. As he bent over the frail hand, mur-

muring the conventional words that presentations are believed to require, Mrs. Dandridge sank into a deep cushioned chair, "Won't you sit down?" she said. He noticed that she did not look directly at him, and that her face was as pallid as her hair. "Thank you," said John Valiant, and

resumed his place on the lower step. Shirley, who had again seated herself, suddenly laughed, and pointed to the book which lay between them. "Imagine what we are doing, dearest! We were reading 'Lucile' together."

She saw the other wince, and the deep dark eyes lifted, as if under compulsion, from the book-cover to Valiant's face. He was startled by Shirley's cry and the sudden limp unconscious settling-back into the cushions of the fragile form.

CHAPTER XIX.

John Vallant went back along the Red Road. He had waited in the garden at Rosewood till Shirley, aided by Emmaline and with Ranston's anxious face hovering in the background, having performed those gentle offices which a woman's fainting spell requires, had come to reassure him and to say good night.

As he threw off his coat in the bedroom he had chosen for his own, he felt the hard corner of the "Lucile" in the pocket, and drawing it out, laid it on the table by the bedside. He seemed to feel again the tingle of his cheek where a curling strand of her coppery hair had sprung against it when her head had bent beside his own to read the marked lines.

When he had undressed he sat an hour in the candle-blaze, a dressinggown thrown over his shoulders, striving vainly to recreate that evening tall, to remember her every word and look and movement. For a breath her face would flush suddenly before him, like a live thing; then it would mysteriously fade and elude him, though he clenched his hands on the arms of his chair in the fierce mental



Shirley, Who Had Again Seated Herself, Suddenly Laughed, and Pointed to the Book.

effort to recall it. Only the intense

surances, now and then stooping to lay hand lovingly up and down its outline noting with a recurrent passion of tenderness the transparency of the skin with its violet veining and the shadows beneath the closed eyes. Emmaline moving on soft worsted-shod feet about the dim room, at length had

"You go tuh baid, honey. I stay with Mis' Judith till she go tuh sleep." "Yes, go. Shirley," said her mother. "Haven't I any privileges at all? Can't I even faint when I feel like it, without calling out the fire-brigade? You'll pamper me to death and heaven knows don't need it."

"You won't let me telephone for Doctor Southall?" "Certainly not!

"And you are sure it was nothing but the roses?"

"Why, what else should it be?" said

her mother almost poevishly. "I must really have the arbors thinned out. On heavy nights it's positively overpowering. Go along now, and we'll talk about it tomorrow. I can ring if I want anything."

In her room, Shirley undressed thoughtfully. There was between her and her mother a fine tenuous bond of sympathy and feeling as rare, perhaps, as it was lovely. She could not remember when the other had not been a semi-invalid, and her earliest childhood recollections were punctuated with the tap of the little cane. Tonight's sudden indisposition had shocked and disturbed her; to faint at a rush of perfume seemed to suggest a growing weakness that was alarming. Tomorrow, she told herself, she would send Ranston with a wagonload of the roses to the hospital at

Charlottesville. She slipped on a pink shell-shaded dressing-gown of slinky silk with a riot of azaleas scattered in the weave, and then, dragging her chair before the open window, drew aside the light curtain and began to brush her hair. All at once her gaze fell upon the floor, and she shrank backward from a twisting thread-like thing whose bright saffron-yellow glowed sharply against the dark carpet. She saw in an instant, however, that it was nothing more dangerous than a fragment of love-vine from the garden, which had clung to her skirt. She picked up the tiny mass of tendrils and with a slow smile tossed it over her right shoulder through the window. "If it takes root," she said aloud, "my sweet heart loves me." She leaned from the sill to peer down into the misty garden, but could not follow its fail.

vision of him wandering, candle p the right numbers." hand, through the empty echoin; rooms, looking at the voiceless portraits on the walls, thinking perhaps of his father, of the fatal duel of which

way he had spoken of his father! As she leaned, out of the stillness the village. She counted the strokes falling clearly or faintly as the sluggish breeze ebbed or swelled. It was

She drew back, dropped the curtain to shut out the wan glimmer, and in the darkness crept into the soft bed as if into a hiding-place.

he had never known. She liked the

A warm sun and an air mildly mellow. A faint gold-shadowed mist over the valley and a soft lilac haze blending the rounded outlines of the hills Through the shrubbery at Damory Court a cardinal darted like a crimson shuttle, to rock impudently from a fleering limb, and here and there on the bluish-ivory sky, motionless as a pasted wafer, hung a hawk; from time to time one of these wavered and slanted swiftly down, to climb once more in a huge spiral to its high tower

Perhaps it wondered, as its telescopic eye looked down. That had been its choicest covert, that disheveled tangle where the birds held perpetual carnival, the weasel lurked in the underbrush and the rabbit lined his windfall. Now the wildness was gone. A pergola, glistening white, now upheld the runaway vines, making a sickle-like path from the upper terrace to the lake. In the barn loft the pigeons still quarrelled over their new cotes of fresh pine, and under a clump of locust trees at a little distance from the house, a half-dozen dolls' cabins on stilts stood waiting the honey-storage of the black and gold bees.

There were new denizens, also These had arrived in a dozen zinc tanks and willow hampers, to the amaze of a sleepy express clerk at the railroad station: two swans now sailed majestically over the lily ponds of the lake, along its gravel rim and a pair of bronze-colored ducks waddled and preened, and its placid surface rippled and broke to the sluggish backs of goldfish and the firting fins of red Japanese carp. The house itself wore another air.

Its look of unkemptness had largely vanished. The soft gray tone of age remained, but the bleakness and forlornness were gone; there was about all now a warmth and genial bearing that hinted at mellowed beauty, firelight and cheerful voices within.

Valiant heaved a long sigh of satisfaction as he stood in the sunlight gazing at the results of his labors. He blue of her eyes, the tawny sweep of was not now the flippant boulevardier her hair-these and the touch of her, to whom money was the sine qua non the consciousness of her warm and of existence. He had learned a sovervivid fragrance, remained to wrap all eign lesson-one gained not through his senses in a mist woven of gold the push and fight of crowds, but in the simple peace of a countryside, unvexed by the clamor of gold and the toward him and he caught her, feel- Shirley, meanwhile, had sat some complex problems of a competitive exing for a sharp instant the adorable time beside her mother's bed, leaning istence—that he had inherited a need of activity, of achievement that he had been born to do.

"Chum" he said to the dog rolling on his back in the grass, "what do you think of it all, anyway?" He reached down, seized a hind leg and whirling him around like a teetotum, sent him flying into the bushes. whence Chum launched again upon him, like a catapult. He caught the white shoulders and held him vise-like. "Just about right, eh? But wait till we get those ramblers!"

"And to think," he continued, whimsically releasing him, "that I might have gone on, one of the little-neckclam crowd I've always trained with, at the same old pace, till the Vermouth-cocktail-Palm-Beach career got a double Nelson on me and the umpire counted me out. At this moment I wouldn't swap this old house and land, and the sunshine and that 'gyarden' and Unc' Jefferson and Aunt Daph and the chickens and the birds and all the rest of it, for a mile of Millionaires' Row."

He went into the house and to the library. The breeze through the wideflung bow-window was fluttering the scribable atmosphere of disconsolate assigns; Rosetta Sanderson or her unpapers on the desk and the map on filth, of unredeemed squalor and vile known heirs, legatees, devisees or asthe wall was flapping sidewise. He ness. went to straighten it, and then saw what he had not noticed before—that it covered something that had been let into the plaster. He swung it aside and made an exclamation. He was looking at a square, uncom

promising wall-safe, with a round figured disk of white metal on its face. He knelt before it and tried its knob. After a moment it turned easily. But



Tried the Numbers Carefully, First Right, Then Left: 17-28-94 The Heavy Door Opened.

the resolute steel door would not open though he tried every combination

Long ago her visitor would have | that came into his mind. "No use," LOCAL WOMAN NOW reached Damory Court. She had a he said disgustedly. "One must have

Then he lifted his fretted frame and smore his grimy hands together. "Confound it!" he said with a short laugh. Hair Beautifier to give to her friends "Here I am, a bankrupt, with all this outfit-clear to the very finger-bowlshanded to me on a silver tray, and I'm mad as scat because I can't open the cause not only does each one of the first locked thing I find!"

He ran upstairs and donned a rough corduroy jacket and high leather leggings. "We're going to climb the hill today, Chum," he announced, "and no more moccasins need apply."

In the lower hall, however, he suddenly stopped stock-still, "The slip of paper that was in the china dog!" he exclaimed, "What a chump I am not to have thought of it!" He found it other hair preparations combined in its pigeonhole and, kneeling down | Sprinkle a little Harmony Hair Beauti before the safe, tried the numbers carefully, first right, then left: 17-28-94-0. The heavy door opened. "I was right!" he exulted. "It's the

plate." He drew it out, piece by piece. Each was bagged in dark-red Canton flannel. He broke the tape of one bag and exposed a great silver pitcher, tarnished purple-blue like a raven's wing-then a tea-service. Each piece, large and small, was marked with the greyhound rampant and the motto. 'And to think," he said, "that my great-great-grandfather buried you with his own hands under the ztables when Tarieton's raiders swept the valley before the surrender at Yorktown! Only wait till Aunt Daphne gets you polished up, and on the sideboard! You're the one thing the place has

With the dog for comrade he traersed the garden and plunged across the valley below, humming as he went. The place was pathless and over-

grown with paw-paw bushes and sassafras. Great trees stood so thickly n places as to make a twilight and the connier spots were masses of pink laurel, polson-ivy, flaming purple thododendron and wine-red tendrils of interbraided briers. This was the forest land of whose possibilities he had thought. In the heart of the woods he came upon a great limb that had been wrenched off by storm. The broken wood was of a deep rich brown, shading to black. He broke off his song, snapped a twig and smelled it. Its sharp acrid odor was unmistakable. He sudienly remembered the walnut tree at Rosewood and what Shirley had said: I know a girl who had two in her

yard, and she went to Europe on He looked about him; as far as he

could see the trees reared, hardy and perfect, untouched for a generation. He selected one of medium size and pulling a creeper, measured its circumference and gaging this measure with his eye, made a penciled calculation on the back of an envelope. "Great Scott'" he said jubilantly to the dog: "that would cut enough to wainscot the Damory Court library and build twenty sideboards!"

He sat down on a mossed boulder, breathless, his eyes sparkling. He had thought himself almost a beggar, and here in his hand was a small fortune! "Talk about engagement rings!" he muttered. "Why, a dozen of these ought to buy a whole tiara!"

At length he rose and climbed on, presently turning at a right-angle to bisect the strip to its boundary before ae paused to rest. "I'm no timbercruiser," he said to himself as he wiped his brow, "but I calculate there are all of three hundred trees big enough to cut. Why, suppose they are worth on an average only a hundred apiece. That would make Good

lord!" he muttered, "and I've been mooning about poverty!"

The growth was smaller and sparser now and before long he came, on the hill's very crest, to the edge of a ragged clearing. It held a squalld set- known heirs, legatees, devisees, or as tlement, perhaps a score of dirt-daubed cabins little better than hovels, some of them mere mud-walled lean-tos, with sod roofs and window-panes of flour-sacking. Fences and outhouses there was none. Littered paths rambled aimlessly hither and thither from chip-strewn yards to starved patches of corn, under-cultivated and blighted. Over the whole place hung an inde- his unknown heirs, legatees, devisees or

With one hand on the dog's collar, hushing him to silence, Valiant, unseen, looked at the wretched place with a shiver. He had glimpsed many wretched purlieus in the slums of great cities, but this, in the open sunlight, with the clean woods about it and the sweet clear blue above, stood out with an unrelieved boldness and contrast that was doubly sinister and forbidding. He knew instantly that the tawdry corner was the community known as Hell's-Half-Acre, the place to which Shirley had made her night ride to rescue Rickey Snyder.

A quick glad realization of her cour age rushed through him. On its heels came a feeling of shame that a spot like this could exist, a foul blot on such a landscape. It was on his own land! Its denizens held place by squatter sovereignty, but he was, nevertheless, . their landlord. The thought bred a new sense of responsibility. Something should be done for them, too.

As he gazed, an uproar in a cabin reached a climax. A red-bearded figure in nondescript garments shot from the door and collapsed in a heap in the dirt. He got up with a dreadful oath—a jug thrown at him grazing his temple as he did so-and shaking be his fist behind him, staggered into a near-by lean-to.

Valiant turned away with a feeling almost of nausea, and plunged back down the forest hillside.

Continued on page 9.

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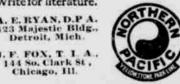
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STATE OF MICHIGAN, County of Gratiot in the Circuit court for the County of Gratiot: In Chancery.

Anthony L. Landi and Ann L. Landi omplainants, vs. John H. Ostrand, or is unknown heirs, legatees, devisees or assigns; Catherine Cook, or her unsigns; James Thompson, or his unknown heirs, legatees, devisees car as signs; Willet R. Steel, or his unknown heirs, legatees, devisees, or assigns: Henry T. Burdick, or his unknown heir legatees, devisees or assigns; Willian Wooley, or his unknown heirs, legatees, devisees or assigns; John Steens, or his unknown heirs, legatees, derisces or assigns: Moses B. Fields, or igns, Defendants.

At a regular session of said Court held in the Court House, in the village of Ithaca, in said county, on the 10th day of February, A. D. 1914 Present, the Hon. Kelly S. Searl, Cir-

cuit Judge. Anthony L. Landi and Ann L. Landi the above named complainants, having filed in said cause a Bill of Complain again." the above named and unnamed nd unascertained defendants, and which said suit is brought to quiet and remove clouds from the title to lands situated in said county of Gratiot and described as the south half of the south east quarter of section thirty, and the east ten acres of the north twenty-eight and onehalf acres of the north west fractional quarter of section thirty-one all in township nine north of range one west, Michgan, and the said Bill of Complaint

having been duly verified by the said Complainants, and, It satisfactorily appearing to the Court rom said verified bill of complaint and rom affidavit on file in said cause that diligent search and inquiry have been made to ascertain the present residence and whereabouts of the above named defendants, John H. Ostrand, Cather ine Cook, James Thompson, Willet I Steel, Henry T. Burdick, William C. Wooley, John Stevens, Moses B. Fields, and Rosetta Sanderson, and their unknown heirs, legatees, devisees or assigns, and it is not known and cannot ascertained whether they or any of them are living or dead, or where he, she or they may reside, if living, or whether the apparent title, right, interest, claim in or to the said lands has been by them or by any of them assigned to any person or persons, or, if dead, whether he, she, or they have personal representatives or heirs living, or where

they, or some of them may living, or whether such appar interest, claim or possible right disposed of by will, and, if by wer sis, her or their heirs, de sor assigns;

Therefore, On motion of O. G. olicitor for Complainants, it is or hat the above named defendants, J Thompson, Willet R. Steel, Henry T. Burdick, William C. Wooley, John Stevens, Moses B. Fields, and Rosetta Sanderson or their union. H. Ostrand, Catherine Cook, erson or their unknown heirs, legatees, devisees or assigns, cause his, her or their appearance to be entered in this cause on or before the 11th day of July A. D. 1914, and in case of his , her or their appearance that he, she or they cause his, her or their answer or an swers to Complainants' Bill of Complaint to be filed in said cause and a copy or copies thereof to be served on Com-plainants' solicitor within twenty days after service on him, her or them of a copy of said bill of complaint and notice of this order, and in default thereof, said bill of complaint be taken as confessed by said defendants or so many of them as shall be in default.

And it is further ordered that within twenty days after the date of this order the Complainants cause a copy thereof to be published in the Alma Record. newspaper printed, published and circulating in said county, and that such publication be continued therein at least once each week for six successive weeks. or that a copy of this order be personally served on each of said defendants at least twenty days before the time prescribed herein for their appearance. KELLY S. SEARL. Circuit Judge

Countersigned; R. E. HUGHES.

Register in Chancery.

This suit is brought to quiet and renove clouds from the title to the land lescribed in said bill of complaint as The south half of the south east quar-

r of section thirty and the east tem

eres of the north twenty-eight and onealf acres of section thirty-one, all in waship nine north of range one west, O. G. TUTTLE

Solicitor for Complainants Ithaca, Michigan,

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